

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-08 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /085 W

-----011220Z 125074 /14

R 311301Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9407

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BELGRADE 575

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS YO RH

SUBJ: NKOMO AND MUGABE VISITS TO YUGOSLAVIA

1. SUMMARY: ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGEABLE YUGOSLAV, NKOMO STILL OPEN TO DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION, THOUGH NOT OVERLY SANGUINE ON PROSPECTS THEREFOR IN WAKE OF ALTEST SMITH REJECTION, PLACES BLAME FOR FAILURE OF NEGOTIATIONS TO DATE SQUARELY ON BRITISH FOR NOT HAVING "TRIED HARD ENOUGH" AND HOLDS OUT AT LEAST SMALL HOPE FOR INITIATIVE BY NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION. SAME OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGED ONGOING (THOUGH PURPORTEDLY LIMITED) GOY MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO NKOMO-MUGABE COALITION, WHICH GOY CONSIDERS DOMINANT FORCE IN "ZIMBABWE LIBERATION MOVEMENT", BUT MAINTAINED THAT MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE FACTIONS ALSO RECIPEINTS OF SOME YUGOSLAV AID. YUGOSLAVS BELIEVE CURRENT AND BROADENING PATRIOTIC FRONT UNITY

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LIKELY TO DISSIPATE TO CONSIDERABLE DEGREE DURING ANTICIPATED POST-"LIBERATION" SHAKEDOWN PERIOD. SAWPY OFFICIAL'S DESCRIPTION OF KNOMO AND MUGABE'S PERSONAL TRAITS WAS STUDY IN CONTRASTS. THE FORMER CHARACTERIZED AS "ELEMENTAL", RATHER EASILY EXCITABLE AND PRONE TO BLUSTER, "NOT THAT FAR FROM AMIN" (BEHAVIORWISE), AT PRESENT NOT LOOKING MUCH TO THE FUTURE, BUT "SLY"

ENOUGH THAT IT NOT LIKELY HE COULD BE EASILY DOMINATED BY INTERNAL RIVALS OR FOREIGN BENEFACTORS. MUGABE GREATLY IMPRESSED YUGOSLAVS AS BRIGHT, "VERY SENSITIVE", POLITICALLY SAVVY, "A SOCIALIST" AND, CLEARLY MORE "IDEOLOGICALLY COMMITTED" THAN NKOMO, THOUGH NOT, ALLEGEDLY, IN A DOGMATIC SENSE. END SUMMARY.

2. POLCOUNS AND EMBOFF WERE BRIEFED JAN 27 ON RECENT MUGABE (DEC 15-18) AND NKOMO (JAN 23-26) VISITS TO BELGRADE BY SAWPY INTERNATIONAL RELAS/COOP COMMISSION SEC BRANKO VULETIC, WHOSE ORGANIZATION FORMS PRIMARY GOY LINK WITH "LIBERATION MOVEMENTS" AND WHO IS PERSONALLY INVOLVED IN FUNNELING GOY ASSISTANCE TO SUCH GROUPS. VULETIC SAID NKOMO, ARRIVING BELGRADE IMMEDIATELY AFTER RECEIVING NEWS OF MOYO'S KILLING IN LUSAKA, UPSET AND "VERY ANGRY", PARTICULARLY AT BRITISH, WHOM HE CLAIMED SIMPLY NOT "TRIED HARD ENOUGH" AND IN WHOSE EFFORTS HE HAD LITTLE OR NO FAITH REMAINING. WHILE SEEN BY YUGOSLAVS AS REALISTIC ENOUGH TO RATE CHANCES FOR SUCH SLIM, NKOMO SAID (BY VULETIC) TO BE STILL OPEN TO DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION (EVEN FOLLOWING NEWS OF LATEST SMITH REJECTION) AND TO BE HOLDING OUT AT LEAST SMALL HOPE FOR INITIATIVE BY NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION. NOTE: DURING PRESS INTERVIEW SHORTLY BEFORE DEPARTING BELGRADE NKOMO WAS ASKED TO COMMENT ON IMPORTANCE OF "CHANGE IN THE WHITE HOUSE TO DEVELOPMENTS IN ZIMBABWE". HE IS REPORTED TO HAVE RESPONDED THAT "WHILE CONTACTS WITH CARTER'S TEAM ARE JUST BEING PLANNED, WASHINGTON'S NEW TONE WITH REGARD TO ADOPTING A MORE RESOLUTE POLICY

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ON SOUTHERN AFRICA HAS BEEN NOTED. ALL IN ALL, WE ARE NOT (NOW) CONFERRING WITH THE AMERICANS AND ARE NOT WAITING FOR THEM".

3. VULETCI CLAIMED PRIMARY PURPOSE OF NKOMO AND MUGABE VISITS AND THOSE OF OTHER "LIBERATION MOVEMENT LEADERS" IS TO SOLICIT YUGOSLAVIA'S ADVICE IN VIEW OF ITS OWN SUCCESSFUL "LIBERATION" STRUGGLE. HE SAID THAT IN REVIEWING SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WITH NKOMO, LATTER HAD AT TIMES BEEN UPSET BY FRANKNESS OF YUGOSLAVS' COUNSEL, PARTICULARLY THAT HE (NKOMO) NOT UNDERESTIMATE CAPACITY OF "THE OTHER SIDE" (I.E., SMITH, SOUTH AFRICA

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R 311301Z JAN 77
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 BELGRADE 575

AND, PRESUMABLY, THEIR "IMPERIALIST" SUPPORTERS) TO
RESPOND WERE "LIBERATION" FORCES TO MOVE HEADSTRONG
TOWARD MILITARY SOLUTION. UPON REFLECTION NKOMO WOULD
"COOL DOWN" AND APPRECIATE WHAT YUGOSLAVS WERE TELLING
HIM. SUCH BEHAVIOR, VULETIC MAINTAINED, WAS CHARACTER-
ISTIC OF NKOMO, WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS AN "ELEMENTAL"
PERSON, RATHER EASILY EXCITABLE AND SEEMING TO ENJOY
THROWING HIS WEIGHT AROUND. IT CLEAR, VULETIC ADDED,
NKOMO CONSIDERS MUGABE "ABOUT THREE LEVELS BELOW"
HIMSELF, AT ANOTHER POINT STATING OF NKOMO "HE'S NOT
THAT FAR FROM AMIN" (IN BEHAVIOR). COMMENTING ON
NKOMO'S POLITICAL ORIENTATION, VULETIC SAID NKOMO,
THOUGH UNDERSTANDABLY PREOCCUPIED WITH CURRENT SITUATION,
HAD NEVERTHELESS NOT STRUCK YUGOSLAVS AS PARTICULARLY
FORWARD THINKING. HE WAS, HOWEVER, CONSIDERED "SLY"
AND SUFFICIENTLY SO THAT IT UNLIKELY HE COULD EASILY
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BE DOMINATED BY INTERNAL RIVALS OR FOREIGN BENEFACTORS
IN THE FUTURE.

4. NKMO-LED DEL (WHICH INCLUDED ZAPU "DEPSEC FOR
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS" DANIEL MAJIMBAMUTO (PHONETIC)
AND ZAPU "LEADESHIP MEMBER IN DAR ES SALAAM" ALBERT

NKSALE (PHONETIC) MET WITH SAWPY PRES PETROVIC-SANE, YUGOSLAV PRESIDENCY MEMBER FOR SERBIA STAMBOLIC, LCY EXECCOMM SEC DOLANC, DEP FED SEC FOR FORAFFS MOJSOV AND DEP FED SEC FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE COL GEN MILOS SUMONJA. SUMONJA MEETING UNDERSCORES IMPORTANT (AND ALMOST ALWAYS DOWNPLAYED) MILITARY ASSISTANCE ASPECT OF "LIBERATION LEADER" VISITS TO YUGOSLAVIA. NOTE: IN AFOREMENTIONED PRESS INTERVIEW, NKOMO NOTED POINTEDLY, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ON VALUE OF NON-ALIGNED SUPPORT, " THE DECLARATIONS FROM COLOMBO ARE A VALUABLE MORAL STIMULUS TO US. HOWEVER, I THINK THERE SHOULD BE MORE PRACTICAL EFFECTS, CONCRETE AID, WHICH, FOR EXAMPLE, YUGOSLAVIA IS GIVING US...AS ARE SEVERAL OTHER COUNTRIES."

5. BULETIC ACKNOWLEDGED THAT GOY CONTINUES TO PROVIDE MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO NKOMO-MUGABE FORCES, WHICH YUGOSLAVS PERCEIVE AS DOMINATING "ZIMBABWE LIBERATION MOVEMENT", BUT CLAIMED SOME GOY ASSISTANCE ALSO GOES TO MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE FACTIONS. HE ARGUED THAT SCOPE OF GOY MILITARY ASSISTANCE (BOTH IN THIS INSTANCE AND TO OTHER SUCH GROUPS IN GENERAL) OUGHT NOT BE OVERESTIMATED, THAT YUGOSLAV RESOURCES IN THIS AREA LIMITED, PARTICULARLY BY NEEDS OF YUGOSLAVIA'S OWN DEFENSE FORCES AND THAT PREPONDERANCE OF GOY MATERIAL AID IS OF NON-MILITARY NATURE. HE MENTIONED RAPIDLY RISING WEAPONS COSTS, AT ONE POINT COMMENTING THAT "AT \$1,000 FOR EACH GIN" GOY'S LIMITED RESOURCES DID NOT GO FAR AND CLEARLY IMPLIED YUGOSLAVS OFTEN UNABLE TO MEET "LIBERATION" LEADERS' (PRESUMABLY INFALTED) ARMS

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REQUESTS. THEY (NOT SPECIFICALLY NKOMO-MUGABE) MUST THEN GO TO THOSE WITH GREATER SUPPLY CAPABILITIES, SUCH AS THE SOVIETS, HE ADDED, WARY THOUGH THEY MAY BE OF THE POLITICAL COSTS INVOLVED. IN EXPLAINING GOY'S FOCUSING ITS SUPPORT ON NKOMO-MUGABE COALITION, VULETIC STRESSED ALLEGED POLITICAL IMPOTENCE OF MUZOREWA AND SITOLE, CALLING THE FORMER'S FOLLOWING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY RELIGIOUS AND THE LATTER'S POLITICAL BASE EXTREMELY LIMITED.

6. VULETIC DESCRIBED MUGABE AS A "SOCIALIST" AND, WHILE CLEARLY MORE "IDEOLOGICALLY COMMITTED" THAN NKOMO, NOT DOGMATICALLY SO. NOTE: ONE QUESTIONS DEGREE TO WHICH HE NON-DOGMATIC, HOWEVER, IN READING MUGABE-AUTHORED ARTICLE IN JAN 5 ISSUE OF BELGRADE'S "MEDUNARODNA POLITIKA". THEREIN HE STATES "THE CLASS STRUCTURE WHICH HAS EXISTED (IN ZIMBABWE) TO THIS DAY HAS, WITH INCREASED INVESTMENT AND UNABATED THIRST FOR

PROFIT, INTENSIFIED THE ANTAGONISM BETWEEN THE TWO CLASSES (I.E., "THE PROFIT-SEEKING CAPITALIST CLASS OF WHITE NEWCOMERS" AND "THE BLACK INDIGENES WHO BECAME SUBJUGATED AS A EMPLOYED CLASS"), WHILE THE RACIAL DIMENSION OPERATES AS ITS CONSOLIDATING FEATURE...

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AGAINST THE POLITICAL MACHINATIONS OF THE IMPERIALIST POWERS...ZANU AND ZAPU DEMONSTRATED THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR NEWLY-FORGED UNITY AND FOILED THE EVIL INTENTIONS UNDERLYING THE CONVENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE" , (I.E., AN EFFORT BY "BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES...TO IMPOSE ON THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE A PUPPET GOVT WHOSE MAIN PURPOSE WOULD HAVE BEEN TO PRESERVE THEIR OWN ECONOMIC INTERESTS"). AND IN DENOUNCING AT BELGRADE PRESS CONFERENCE WESTERN PRESS COVERAGE OF ZIMBABWE "LIBERATION" STRUGGLE, HE SAID, "IN CONTRAST, THE PRESS REPORTING IN SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY YUGOSLAVIA, IS TRU".

7. THAT YUGOSLAVS WERE GREATLY IMPRESSED WITH MUGABE (IN CONTRAST TO NKOMO) WAS EVIDENT IN VULETCI'S REPEATED COMMENTS THAT THEY HAD FOUND THE ZANU LEADER

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BRIGHT, "VERY SENSITIVE" AND POLITICALLY SAVVY. HE WENT ON TO CHARACTERIZE MUGABE AS CAUTIOUS AND ACUTELY AWARE OF NKOMO'S CURRENT AND LIKELY CONTINUED PRESENCE IN THE "FRONT" LEADERSHIP AND WHAT THIS BEHELD FOR HIS OWN (MUGABE'S) POLITICAL PROSPECTS. ADDRESSING IN GENERAL TERMS PROBABLE POST-"LIBERATION" FORM OF GOVT, VULETIC SAID "THESE AFRICANS" SHOW LITTLE INTEREST IN "PARLIAMENTARY" GOVT AND "STRONG-MAN" RULE, AS IT HAS ELSEWHERE, MIGHT WELL FOLLOW "LIBERATION" IN ZIMBABWE. VULETIC DID NOT FORESEE CURRENT AND (HE CLAIMED) BROADENING PATRIOTIC FRONT UNITY SURVIVING THROUGH ANTICIPATED POST-"LIBERATION" SHAKDOWN PERIOD, THOUGH HE REFRAINED FROM SUGGESTING WHOM YUGOSLAVS BELIEVE IS LIKELY TO EMERGE DOMINANT.

8. COMMENT: IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY WITH ANY CERTAINTY JUST HOW SELF-SERVING WERE VULETIC'S CLAIMS THAT THE GOY HAD COUNSELED RESTRAINT TO NKOMO AND MUGABE, THAT ITS MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THEM HAS BEEN MINIMAL, THAT MUGABE IS MORE REASONABLE THAN NKOMO AND NOT A DOGMATIST AND THAT THEIR COALITION IS UNQUESTIONABLY THE DOMINANT POLITICAL FORCE IN THE "LIBERATION MOVEMENT". BUT WITH THE TWO LEADERS' PUBLIC EMBRACING OF NONALIGNMENT, AT LEAST MUGABE'S "COMMITTMENT " TO "SOCIALISM" AND THE "FRONT'S" (AT LEAST TO THE YUGOSLAVS) LOOKING MORE AND MORE LIKE A WINNER, THE YUGOSLAV SYMPATHIES VULETIC VOICED ARE MORE THAN VAGUELY REMINISCENT OF THOSE THE GOY EXHIBITED AS EVENTS WERE UNFOLDING IN ANGOLA IN '75. YORK

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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